



State Capitol | Lansing, Michigan 48913

PH (517) 373.6920 | FAX (517) 373.2751

www.senate.michigan.gov/gop/senator/kuipers/

For Immediate Release
March 9, 2006

Contact: Darin Ackerman
517-373-6920

Senate education panel passes graduation-requirement plan

LANSING — The Senate-backed bipartisan plan for statewide high-school graduation requirements won the backing of the Senate Education Committee today.

Sen. Wayne Kuipers, who chairs the committee and introduced Senate Bill 1124, said his plan would make Michigan a national leader in having rigorous high school graduation requirements.

“Michigan schoolchildren deserve an education that gets them ready for the 21st century job market,” said Kuipers, R-Holland. “Under this plan, we’ve addressed the concerns we heard about the state board’s proposal but we haven’t diluted the demanding standards that prepare young people to succeed in today’s workplace.”

Highlights of the Senate plan, which would go into effect for students entering ninth grade in 2007, include:

- Four credits of English
- Four math credits, including geometry, and Algebra I and II.
 - Senate plan allows students to take Algebra II over two years.
- Three science credits.
- Three social science credits.
- Two foreign-language credits that can be completed in any grade.
- One health and physical-education credit.
- One visual, performing or applied arts credit.
- One course or online learning experience, or an online experience that is integrated into high-school curriculum.
- Students can test out of credit requirements.
- Students can opt out of the Michigan Merit Core and into a career-tech path after their sophomore year.
- If schools can’t meet the requirements, they can apply to the Michigan Department of Education for a phase-in plan.
- Students in seventh grade would take a career exploration program.

The education committee held nine hearings across the state to seek input from parents, educators and others. Existing law requires just a semester of civics class before graduation and leaves other standards to local boards.

SB 1124 now heads to the full Senate for consideration.

###